

Special Bulletin B

Dimock Residential Groundwater Site
Intersection of PA Routes 29 at 2024
Dimock, PA

Date: February 19, 2012
To: Regional Response Center, U.S. EPA Region III
From: Richard Rupert, On-Scene Coordinator
Eastern Response Branch (3HS31)
Subject: High Arsenic in Drinking Water at Residence HW47

I. Issue

On February 8, 2012, a groundwater sample was collected from the potable water supply well at residence HW47 (Residence). The final chemical analytical report from the Residence indicates concentrations of arsenic at greater than 90 micrograms per liter (ug/l or parts per billion - ppb) both at the well head (90.7 ppb) and the drinking water tap (91.1 ppb) located at the kitchen sink. The maximum contaminant level (MCL) for arsenic is 10 ppb. The EPA toxicologist, in an opinion dated February 17, 2012, has reviewed the results presented in the final chemical analytical report and indicates that the concentration of arsenic found in the HW47 well represent a significant threat to Resident's health.

This Residence is located within the Dimock Residential Groundwater Site (Site). The action memorandum for the Site, dated January 19, 2012, sets forth the description of the Site, contaminants and the basis for EPA's action there.

On February 17, 2012, the OSC recommended an action to provide alternate water to the Residence as soon as possible. OEM concurrence and verbal approval for this action were received on the same afternoon.

Later that same afternoon the OSC and Site Administrative Officer (SAO) visited the Resident to share the results of the recent well sampling and offer drinking water. The Resident indicated that PaDEP had called this past Wednesday and indicated their sample (collected during the EPA sample collection) had tested positive for arsenic at 79 ppb. The Resident said that PaDEP called Cabot and asked them to provide drinking water, which Cabot did. As a result the Resident has enough water for cooking and drinking purposes. The Resident also indicated that Cabot resampled the well.

The Resident indicated there was an operating reverse osmosis (RO) unit in the residence that evidently was not functioning properly. The system was being repaired during the visit. The Resident said that Cabot had sampled the well in 2010 but, had never provided a copy of the results. A later call to Cabot revealed this sample contained arsenic at 16 ppb. It is uncertain how long the Resident has been drinking arsenic tainted water. The Resident mentioned that at some time in the past water at the Residence tested positive for arsenic but, at levels around 1-4 ppb.

II. Actions

The OSC is arranging for an EPA toxicologist to visit the Resident. A water sample, to confirm the operating efficiency of the RO unit, may also be collected. Bottled water may be provided until the sample results confirm the water is safe to drink.

The assessment and background investigation to determine the presence and origin of contaminants in the groundwater is continuing.

III. Current Costs

The actions described above can be accomplished within the present approved budget.

A. Estimated Costs

Agency	Costs to Date	Ceiling
ERRS	\$89,703	\$200,000
Unallocated		\$ 25,000

B. Contribution to Remedial Performance

A remedial action is not anticipated and therefore this removal action is not inconsistent with any proposed remedial action.

C. Compliance with ARARS

The removal action will comply with all Applicable or Relevant and Appropriate Requirements (ARARs), to the extent practicable, considering the exigencies of the situation.

IV. Expected Change in the Situation Should No Action be Taken or Action Delayed

If no action is taken, the Resident may continue to consume well water which poses a health threat.

V. Outstanding Policy Issues

There are no known outstanding policy issues.

VI. Enforcement

The OSC will make all available information available to enforcement/cost recovery unit.



Richard Rupert
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US EPA Region III